August 6, 1959

Mr. Nikita Khrushchev
The Kremlin
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

Dear Mr. Khrushchev:

I hope that your coming visit to our country is pleasant and that you will learn much about us, especially the friendly feelings the people of the United States have for all the peoples of the world and the desire most of us have that the other peoples soon will be able to enjoy a standard of living comparable with ours.

This hope I have expressed is a sincere one, but it is not the primary reason for this letter. That is an idea I have had for some time. I believe it first occurred to me while watching Mr. Mikoyan on our television. Mr. Mikoyan talked with some eloquence for peaceful competition between your country and ours, and recently the same ideas were expressed in the television account of your discussion with Mr. Nixon at the United States' exposition in Moscow.

In short, there has been much talk of peaceful competition, and perhaps too much competition of a different character. It is my proposal that we do something besides talk about it. Let's do it, or at least begin to do it.

There are undoubtedly some fields in which the current odds might be unfair to one country or the other. But the field I know best, poultry husbandry, is one in which both countries have a long history and I presume has resulted in a good appetite in both countries. Competition should be pretty equal, based at least upon opportunity and science. I recall recently having read of some very interesting experiments in genetics, for example, by Soviet scientists.

Of course, the finished product, in food, is the real test. But there are many things that enter into the making of that product. Besides the taste of the chicken, we in this country think the following among the most important in evaluating achievement in poultry raising: speed of growth and efficiency.

I am empowered to speak for no one except myself, and perhaps it will sound somewhat impudent if I pretend that I, a small farmer by the standards of this country, can and do speak for my country. But if a beginning is to be made, and I think it should, somebody has to make it. So I would like to compete, quite peacefully, with any Soviet farmer, farm or any

other kind of poultry-raising establishment, in chicken-raising as outlined above. How good are the chickens that are produced, how efficiently are they produced, and how rapidly. I further propose that we break this into two parts: the immediate past, say the past two years, and the immediate future, also two years.

I am willing for anyone you may designate, if my challenge is accepted, to go through my freezers and select representative samples of my product in several categories, such as individual serving birds, double servings, and rotisserie. I think judging should be on both appearance and taste. Anybody competent will satisfy me as a judge. In the other categories, speed of growth and efficiency, I have authentic records, some a matter of public record and the others easily confirmed, that I will offer. Your side may do likewise.

If all of this suits you, and should it be as pleasant on both sides as I hope it might, perhaps sometime in the future we can broaden it to include chicken cooking, a field in which I also suffer from a lack of modesty. But I hope you will forgive this because my wife has won the national chicken cooking championship and I the national chicken barbecuing championship.

Ours is anything but a pretentious place and because we have decided not to go in debt, doing only what we can pay for when we do it, it is far from finished. But should you, on your visit to the United States, want to see and check and see that in this country we still have small farms and small farmers, my wife and I would be very happy for you to visit us and perhaps select the poultry that I would put in competition with Soviet poultry. We are only an hour by good road from Washington.

Please accept my assurances that the foregoing is inspired by no one and nothing except a desire to promote peaceful and friendly relations and understanding between our two peoples.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg